

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 19

August 15, 2000

SUBJECT: VEHICLE INVENTORY PROCEDURES - REVISED

**PURPOSE:** Currently, the Department utilizes the California Highway Patrol Vehicle Report, CHP Form 180, for vehicles taken into lawful police custody (See Special Order No. 35, November 16, 1998, Vehicle Investigation, Form 3.07 - Deactivated; State of California, Department of California Highway Patrol, Vehicle Report, CHP 180 Form - Implemented). It has been determined that additional procedures are needed when conducting an inventory search of a vehicle that is taken into lawful police custody. These procedures will protect property contained within the vehicle from theft, as well as protect the Department and tow companies from claims of loss. This Order revises the vehicle inventory procedure to be followed when Department employees take a vehicle into lawful police custody.

**PROCEDURE:** A vehicle inventory is not intended to be a search for items of evidence, but is intended to identify and list all property that is contained within the vehicle being taken into lawful police custody.

- I. **OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY.** Officers shall inventory the contents of all vehicles that are taken into lawful police custody.

The inventory shall include property contained within the vehicle's passenger compartment, glove compartment, console, trunk, and any other compartment or box that may contain property. All property located in these areas shall be listed in the "Remarks" section of the CHP 180.

All unlocked containers found in the vehicle shall be opened and their contents listed in the "Remarks" section on the CHP 180.

**Exception:** If the glove compartment, console, trunk, or unsecured container is locked, and there is no key or mechanical/electrical mechanism to open that area of the vehicle, officers shall not force entry into the locked area to inventory its contents. However, officers shall note that the particular area or item in the vehicle was locked, with no means to open it, in the "Remarks" section of the CHP 180.

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Note: Items of contraband or evidence, which are discovered during the inventory, shall be seized and booked as outlined in the Manual (4/501-590.10 Booking Custody and Disposition of Property) and detailed in corresponding reports. Department Manual Section 4/222.60, outlining procedures for the removal and booking of property, remains in effect and includes property discovered during an inventory.

- II. SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITY. The supervisor reviewing and approving the CHP 180 shall ensure that officers have inventoried and documented all property discovered during the vehicle inventory search.

AMENDMENTS: This Order amends Section 4/222.60 of the Department Manual.

AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY: The commanding officer of each operational bureau shall monitor compliance with this directive in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.30.



BERNARD C. PARKS  
Chief of Police

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